

In the Claims:

The claims are amended as follows.

Cancel cancel claims 65-66 and amend the claims as follows. Note that claims 67-72 are new.

Claims 1-44. Cancelled.

45. (Previously presented) A method of cooking pasta comprising:

- i. preparing a cooking water composition by adding an amount of a salt-containing composition comprising water soluble salts containing calcium, magnesium, zinc and copper cations to a sufficient amount of water to produce said cooking water composition wherein the concentration of calcium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 5 mg/L to about 200 mg/L, the concentration of magnesium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 5 mg/L to about 100 mg/L, the concentration of zinc cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.05 to about 0.50 mg/L; and the concentration of copper cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.01 mg/L to about 0.30 mg/L;
- ii. heating said cooking water composition to cooking temperature;
- iii. adding uncooked pasta to said heated composition of step ii for a time sufficient to cook said pasta; and
- iv. removing said pasta from said heated composition.

46. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said calcium cations are included in said cooking water composition in a concentration ranging from about 50 to about 150 mg/L.

47. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said magnesium cations are included in said cooking water composition in a concentration ranging from about 10 to about 50 mg/L.

48. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said zinc cations are included in said cooking water composition in a concentration ranging from about 0.10 to about 0.25 mg/L.

49. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said copper cations are included in said cooking water composition in a concentration ranging from about 0.05 to about 0.20 mg/L.

50. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises an effective amount of at least one additional cation selected from the group consisting of sodium, potassium, iron, manganese, barium, chromium, boron, cobalt, molybdenum, nickel, vanadium, tin, mixtures thereof, and optionally, a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

51. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 50 wherein said additional cation is selected from the group consisting of iron, manganese or barium in an amount less than about 0.2 mg/L of said cooking water composition.

52. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 45 wherein said calcium cations range from about 50 to about 85 mg/L, said magnesium cations range from about 10 to about 35 mg/L, said zinc cations range from about 0.10 to about 0.25 mg/L and said copper cations range from about 0.05 to about 0.20 mg/L of said cooking water composition.

53. (Previously presented) A method of cooking pasta comprising:
i. preparing a cooking water composition by adding an amount of a salt-containing composition comprising water soluble salts containing calcium, magnesium, zinc and copper cations to a sufficient amount of water to produce said cooking water composition wherein the concentration of calcium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 5 mg/L to about 150 mg/L, the concentration of magnesium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 10 mg/L to about 100 mg/L, the concentration of zinc cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.10 to about 0.50 mg/L; and the concentration of copper cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.01 mg/L to about 0.30 mg/L;

- ii. heating said cooking water composition to cooking temperature;
- iii. adding uncooked pasta to the heated composition of step ii for a time sufficient to cook said pasta; and
- iv. removing said from said heated composition.

54. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 53 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises an effective amount of at least one additional cation selected from the group consisting of sodium, potassium, iron, manganese, barium, chromium, boron, cobalt, molybdenum, nickel, vanadium, tin and mixtures thereof.

55. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 53 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

56. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 54 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

57. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 54 wherein said additional cation is selected from the group consisting of iron, manganese or barium in an amount less than about 0.2 mg/L of said cooking water composition.

58. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 57 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

59. (Previously presented) A method of cooking pasta comprising:
i. exposing uncooked pasta to a cooking water composition at cooking temperature comprising water-soluble salts containing calcium, magnesium, zinc and copper cations and a sufficient amount of water to produce said cooking water composition wherein the concentration of calcium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 5 mg/L to about 150 mg/L, the concentration of magnesium cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 10 mg/L to about 100 mg/L, the concentration of zinc cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.10 to about 0.50 mg/L; and the concentration of copper cations in said cooking water composition ranges from about 0.01 mg/L to about 0.30 mg/L for a time sufficient to cook said pasta; and

- ii. removing said cooked pasta from said heated composition.

60. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 59 wherein said cooking water composition further comprises an effective amount of at least one additional cation selected from the group consisting of sodium, potassium, iron, manganese, barium, chromium, boron, cobalt, molybdenum, nickel, vanadium, tin and mixtures thereof.

61. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 59 wherein said cooking water composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

62. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 60 wherein said cooking water composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

63. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 60 wherein said additional cation is selected from the group consisting of iron, manganese or barium in an amount less than about 0.2 mg/L of said cooking water composition.

64. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 63 wherein said salt-containing composition further comprises a heat resistant nutritional supplement.

65. Cancelled.

66. Cancelled.

The following claims are new:

67. (New) The method according to claim 45 wherein said pasta is macaroni, spaghetti or vermicelli.

68. (New) The method according to claim 53 wherein said pasta is macaroni, spaghetti or vermicelli.

69. (New) The method according to claim 59 wherein said pasta is macaroni, spaghetti or vermicelli.

70. (New) The method according to claim 50 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

71. (New) The method according to claim 55 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

72. (New) The method according to claim 56 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

73. (New) The method according to claim 58 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

74. (New) The method according to claim 61 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

75. (New) The method according to claim 62 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.

76. (New) The method according to claim 64 wherein said nutritional supplement is a vitamin.